

## Lucja Frey and the auriculotemporal nerve syndrome

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Surprisingly little appears to be written in the English literature about the physician whose name is attached to the phenomenon of gustatory sweating. Described by Frey as the 'auriculotemporal nerve syndrome', the condition is characterized by sweating of the skin overlying the parotid gland at the time of salivation. This usually arises as a result of trauma, surgical or otherwise, to the gland and is due to rerouting of the secretomotor parasympathetic fibres to supply the sweat glands in the overlying skin.

Dictionaries of eponyms simply provide the information that Lucja Frey (Figure 1) was born in 1889 and described the condition which bears her name in a paper entitled 'Le Syndrome du Nerf Auriculo-Temporal' published in the *Revue Neurologique* in August 1923<sup>1</sup>. The invaluable assistance of the Polish Medical Association, the Konopka's Central Medical Library in Warsaw and the British Council has allowed us to piece together a few more details about Dr Frey's life.

Born on 3 November 1889 in Lwow, Eastern Poland, she originally studied mathematics at Lwow University under one Professor Smoluchowski. She graduated from the Department of Philosophy and enrolled in the Medical Faculty<sup>2</sup>.

No information is available about her progress through medical school but between 1921 and 1928 Lucja Frey was Senior Assistant in the Neurology Clinic at the University of Warsaw, assisting Professor Kazimierz Orzechowski and it is from this department that she published her important paper. By 1936, the *Medical Yearbook of the Polish Republic* tells us that Dr Frey was working in the Hospital of the Jewish Religious Medical Commune at 8 Rappaporta Street, Lwow<sup>3</sup>. In a series of biographical notes published in 1950<sup>4</sup> the only intimation that she married is given when her name is recorded as 'Dr Lucja Frey-Gottesman'. She died in Lwow in 1943 at the hands of the Nazis<sup>2</sup>.

Her personality is described as follows:

'Extraordinarily modest, quiet and as hardworking as an ant, she was distinguished to no mean extent by innovative creativity. All her research works were characterised by an exceptional accuracy, a seeking for a wide and versatile understanding of the problem under study as well as a deep knowledge of her subject.<sup>2</sup>

Lucja Frey published several other papers on various neurological topics<sup>5</sup>. Those which her Polish biographer cites as her most important work include papers on brain topography<sup>6</sup>, the anatomical changes



Figure 1. Lucja Frey (reprinted from Herman E, *Neurologia Polscy*, 1958<sup>2</sup>)

in Charcot's joints<sup>7</sup>, and a case of aneurysm of the plexus of the medulla<sup>8</sup>.

Although it bears her name, Lucja Frey was certainly not the first person to observe the phenomenon of gustatory sweating. It is stated<sup>9</sup> that the syndrome was first described by Jakub Lipsztat, a Warsaw neurologist and an associate of Samuel Goldflam who published a work entitled 'A case of localised sweating while eating' in 1922 (no further reference available). More recently an account of the phenomenon by Duphenix in the *Memoires de L'Academie Royale de Chirurgie* of 1757<sup>10</sup> has been unearthed<sup>11</sup> and this must surely be the first record of Lucja Frey's syndrome.

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### References

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- 11 Nicolai J-PA. An early account of gustatory sweating (Frey's syndrome): a chance observation 250 years ago. *Br J Plastic Surg* 1985;38:122-3

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## Forthcoming events

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### World Congress on Cardiology

12-15 December 1991, New Delhi, India

Further details from: Miss M Passi, Committee Executive, IJCP, 495 Reddings Lane, Hall Green, Birmingham B11 3DF (Tel: 021-777 7933)

### Fibrinogen - A Cardiovascular Risk Factor

27-28 January 1992, Vienna

Further details from: Professor E Ernst, AKH, University of Vienna, Department of Phys Med Rehab, Wahringer Gurtel 18-20, A-1097 Vienna (Tel: 0222 40400 4330; Fax: 0222 40400 5281)

### Post-Reproductive Gynaecology (Postgraduate Meeting)

28 January 1992, RCOG, London

Further details from: (see entry for 23-24 October 1991)

### Fetal Assessment/Well-Being (Postgraduate Meeting)

29 January 1992, RCOG, London

Further details from: (see entry for 23-24 October 1991)

### Obstetric Ultrasound

10-14 February 1992, RCOG, London

Further details from: (see entry for 23-24 October 1991)

### MRCP Courses

10-14 February 1992, Royal Free Hospital, London

Further details from: Dr D Geraint James, Royal Free Hospital, Pond Street, Hampstead, London NW3 2QG (Tel: 071 794 0500, ext 3931)

### Screening in Gynaecology

20 February 1992, RCOG, London

Further details from: (see entry for 23-24 October 1991)

### Colorectal Disease in 1992: An International Exchange of Medical and Surgical Concepts

20-22 February 1992, Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Further details from: The Cleveland Clinic Educational Foundation, 9500 Euclid Avenue, Room TT-31, Cleveland, OH 44195-5241, USA (Tel: 800 762 8173; Fax: 216 445 9406)

### Colposcopy

17-18 March 1992, RCOG, London

Further details from: (see entry for 23-24 October 1991)

### International Symposium on Recent Advances in Diagnostic Imaging and Radiation Oncology

24-27 March 1992, Kathmandu, Nepal

Further details from: Dr Naresh Prasad, Department of Radiology, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas 77030, USA (Tel: 713 798-4415; Fax: 713 798-5556)

### Tinnitus and its Management

5-9 April 1992, Nottingham University

Further details from: Mrs J P Willoughby, Course Administrator, c/o Institute of Hearing Research, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham NG7 2RD

### 3rd International Conference on SLE

13-15 April 1992, Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London

Further details from: Dr Graham Hughes or Mrs Denzil Fletcher, Rheumatology Department, St Thomas's Hospital, London SE1 7EH (Tel and Fax: 071-633 9422)

### British Association of Oral And Maxillofacial Surgeons: Spring Meeting

25-26 April 1992, Hospitality Inn, Glasgow

Further details from: Mr John Lowry, Honorary Secretary, British Association of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgeons, Royal College of Surgeons of England, 35/43 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3PN (Tel: 071 405 8074; Fax: 071 430 9997)

### 25th Annual Advances and Controversies in Clinical Paediatrics

14-16 May 1992, San Francisco, California

Further details from: Extended Programs in Medical Education, University of California, Room LS-105, San Francisco, CA 94143-0742, USA (Tel: 415 476 4251)

### Digital Imaging Processing Applied to Orthopaedic and Dental Implants

8-13 June 1992, Portugal

Further details from: M Barbosa, Department of Metallurgy, Faculty of Engineering, University of Porto, Rua dos Bragas, 4099 Porto Codex, Portugal (Tel: 2-2009297; Fax: 2-319280)

### 13th International Symposium on Computer Assisted Decision Support & Database Management in Anesthesia, Intensive Care and Cardiopulmonary Medicine

10-12 June 1992, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Further details from: (see entry for 19-22 November 1991)

### 6th International Conference on Behçet's Disease

30 June-1 July 1993, Paris, France

Further details from: Bertrand Wechsler MD, Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital, 47/83 Bd de L'Hopital, 75013 Paris Cedex 13, France (Tel: 45 70 26 67; Fax: 45 70 20 45)